



## Heineken Regatta gets off to a rousing start!

Despite the threatening weather of Sunday morning, the klaxon sound and forty-five catamarans took off for the first of two races in the ten heat series that will comprise the 15<sup>th</sup> annual Heineken Catamaran Regatta. One hundred sailors have traveled from five countries to Aruba and they were greeted with a fabulous opening night party on the Iguana Deck of their host hotel, the Holiday Inn on Saturday night. They enjoyed some terrific entertainment along with their delicious buffet, as Oslin and Janice, Aruba's own international salsa championship winners showed them how we move it in Aruba.

However, these sailors were mostly interested in moving on the water, and they did, with the English team of Stuart Gummer and Gillian Power took the lead and kept it, and are leading the field after day one. Press and VIP's witnessed all the action on the catamaran El Tigre, hosted by regatta organizer Edwin Lodor. This was a very nice start for the British team, as they had bad luck the year before when their boat was destroyed in a collision, but they are back and here to give last year's winner Ruurd van Wieren, a run for his money. Gummer and Power switched from the Spitfire to the F18 class and bought a Capricorn, which certainly seems to be making a difference, as they beat them all on rating (after calculation). Ruurd van Wieren (Tornado, NED) paired with eight year veteran of the regatta, Gerald Loos, took the line honors, which was good enough for a second position on handicap.

In Sunday's second race, the leader made again a mistake. Eduard Zanen and Mischa Heemskerk were far ahead of the runners up, but they sailed an extra round. Zanen: "We are obviously both not able to count from four." Allen and Farren had a fight with Loos and Van Wieren. Reports Allen, "It was just like ten years ago, so here we go again. We were rounding the upwind mark on starboard tack and Gerard Loos tried to sneak in on port tack, so we are going to protest him." They won the protest and the Loos/Van Wieren team was disqualified from the second race. James Power and Marcus Lynch (F18, GBR) became second on rating, followed by John Moret and Gijs Jannink.

The results after day one:

1. GBR – F18 – Gummer/Power, 2 points
2. NED – Tornado – Morret/Jannink, 8 points
3. GBR – Tornado – Allen/Farren, 8 points
4. GBR – F18 – Power/Lynch, 10 points
5. GBR – Tornado – Payne/Hunt, 16 points

During the morning's practice race a big squall caused a domino effect among the catamarans. Hans Breur of the Netherlands reports, "We looked back and the whole fleet laid upside down, so we decided to go back." Some people had a memorable ride, like Chris Sproat on his Spitfire, he confessed "That was the windiest downwind reach, I have ever been in. We sailed straight downwind to the mark, with the gennaker flapping in front of our mainsail. Now we are back on the beach, I can say it was fantastic."

The regatta will continue through Friday with eight more exciting races, and a daily happy hour parties on the Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort Beach. For pure fun and recreation, the one to watch will be Tuesday's VIP race, with guest competitors from around the island paired with the visiting sailors.